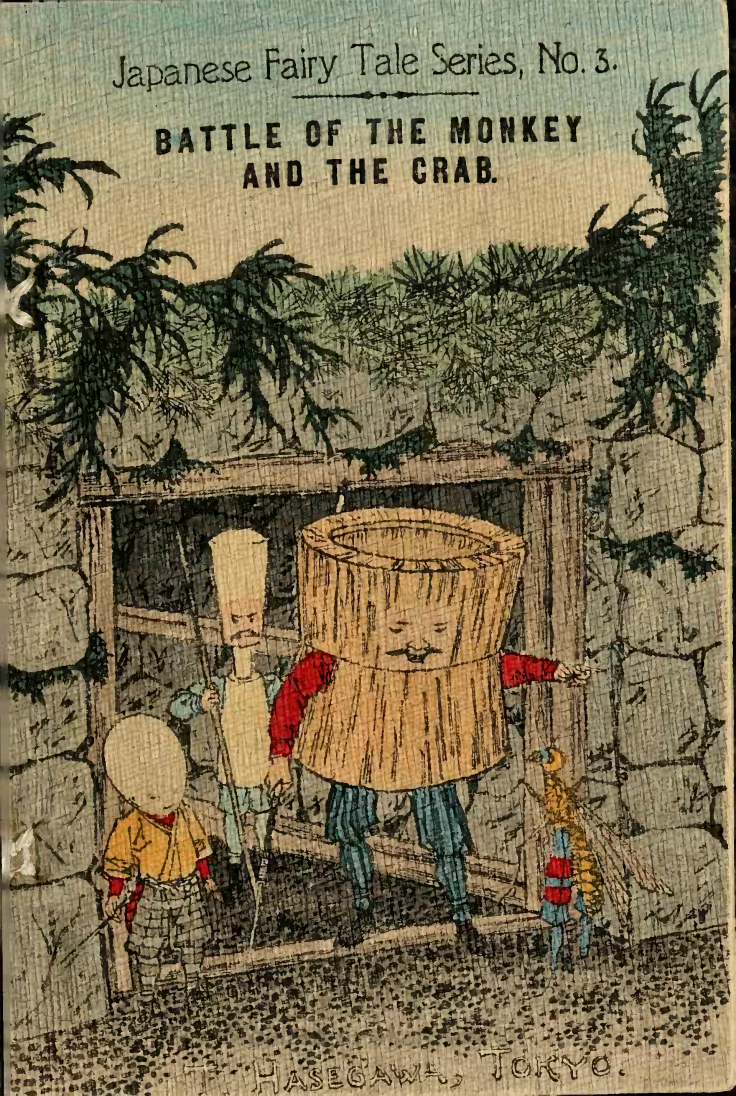
Japanese Fairy Tale Series, No. 3.

BATTLE OF THE MONKEY AND THE CRAB.



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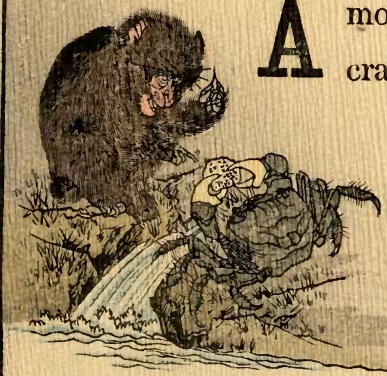

A monkey and a crab once met when going round a mountain.

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The monkey had picked up a persimmon-seed, and the crab had a piece of toasted rice-cake. The monkey seeing this, and wishing to get something that could be turned to good account at once, said: "Pray, exchange that rice-cake for this persimmon-seed." The crab, without a word, gave up his cake, and took the persimmon-seed and planted it. At

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once it sprung up, and soon became a tree so high one had to look up at it. The tree was full of persimmons but the crab had no means of climbing the tree. So he asked the monkey to climb up and get the persimmons for him. The monkey got up on a limb of the tree and began to eat the persimmons. The unripe persimmons he threw at the crab, but

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all the ripe and good ones he put in his pouch. The crab under the tree thus got his shell badly bruised and only by good luck escaped into his hole, where he lay distressed with pain and not able to get up. Now when the relatives and household of the crab heard how matters stood they were surprised and angry, and declared war and attacked the

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monkey, who leading forth a numerous following bid defiance to the other party. The crabs, finding themselves unable to meet and cope with this force,

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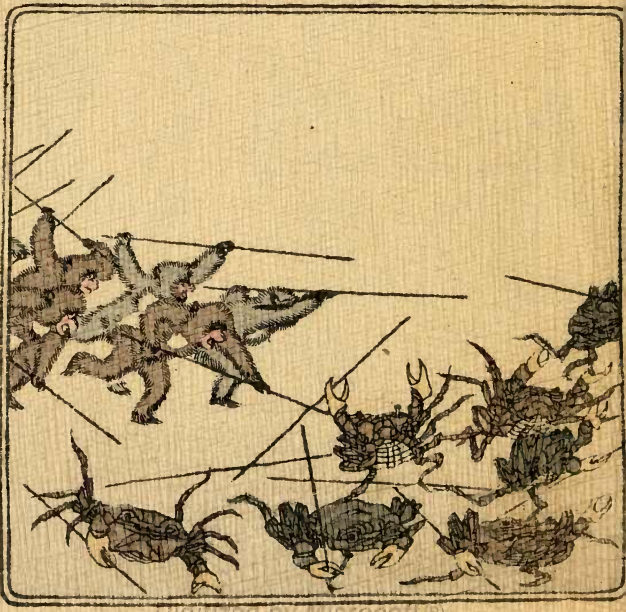
became still more exasperated and enraged, and retreated into their hole, and held a council of war. Then



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came a rice-mortar, a pounder, a bee, and an egg, and together they devised a deep-laid plot to be avenged.

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First, they requested that peace be made with the crabs; and thus they induced the king of the monkeys to enter their hole unattended and seated him on the hearth. The monkey not suspecting any

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plot, took the *hibashi*, or poker, to stir up the slumbering fire, when bang! went the egg, which was lying hidden in the ashes, and burned the monkey's arm. Surpriced and alarmed he plunged

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his arm into the pickle-tub in the kitchen to relieve the pain of the burn. Then the bee which was hidden near the tub stung him sharply in his face already wet with tears. Without waiting to brush

off the bee and howling bitterly, he rushed for the back door: but just then some sea-weed entangled his legs and made him slip. Then, down came the pounder tumbling on him from a shelf, and the mortar too came rolling down on him from the roof of the pouch, and broke his back and so weakened him that he was unable to rise up. Then

out came the crabs in a crowd and brandishling on high their pinchers they pinched the monkey to pieces.

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